

David Blevins. *North Carolina's Barrier Islands: Wonders of Sand, Sea, and Sky*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2017. 188 pp. \$35.00. ISBN 978-1-4696324-9-0.

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What do rising seas, distinctive wildlife nesting areas, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Cape Lookout National Seashore, sea oats, snow geese, loggerhead turtles, and Shackleford Banks stallions have in common? Visitors to North Carolina's barrier islands can locate all of these features on barrier islands at any given moment. *North Carolina's Barrier Islands: Wonders of Sand, Sea, and Sky* provides readers with a detailed description of each North Carolina barrier island and the wildlife or ecological features which are particular to the area. By definition, a "barrier island" is a geographic feature/island which acts as a buffer or "barrier" between the open ocean and sounds, marshes, or the mainland coastline communities. David Blevins explains to readers some of the conditions which form barrier islands, including rising seas, a movable continental shelf, available sand supply, and the presence of waves to move the sand. Throughout the pages of the book, the author details the specific wildlife found on each barrier island and concludes with the factors which make these islands distinctive and worthy of conservation.

Blevins divides his book into four sections: Currituck Banks, Cape Hatteras National Seashore, Cape Lookout National Seashore, and the Southern Islands. Each section contains a brief narrative followed by accompanying color photographs which illustrate the wildlife or ecological features of each island. Specifically, the color photographs include pictures of estuarine nature preserves, live oaks, sanderlings, royal terns, tundra swans, American beech trees, and hognose snakes. The author includes an index, a map which outlines the specific names of North Carolina barrier islands, and a multitude of color photographs. Each chapter title follows a specific detail of the map provided at the beginning of the book. Readers are taken on a journey from the North Carolina/Virginia coast all the way southward to the North Carolina/South Carolina border.

David Blevins is a nature photographer and forest ecologist. The purpose of his books is to aid the reader in forming an appreciation of nature preservation or conservation of the barrier islands as natural wonders of the "Tar Heel State." Besides *North Carolina's Barrier Islands*, David Blevins has also written *Wild North Carolina: Discovering the Wonders of Our State's Natural Communities* (2011).

*North Carolina's Barrier Islands* offers readers a glimpse into the fragile ecosystem of the barrier islands off the North Carolina coast, and is a call to action for human beings to help protect and not overdevelop these islands. In the long run, human beings need to collaborate with the barrier islands so that these islands can be preserved for future generations to enjoy. Because of the book's specific scope and content, it would be appropriate for any public, special or academic library with a biology or ecology focus.

David W. Young  
University of North Carolina at Pembroke